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RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 4954
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RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 5645
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 8074
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3166
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 3444
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 3337
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 3583
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 2485
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 2609
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 3141
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SUBJECT: RAJASTHAN UPDATE: EMI FOUNDER RECEIVES

ANTICIPATORY BAIL, PRESIDENT REMAINS IN JUDICIAL CUSTODY

REF: A. NEW DELHI 1818

[1](#)B. NEW DELHI 1953

[1](#)C. NEW DELHI 2291

[1](#)D. NEW DELHI 2446

[1](#)1. (U) Summary: Emmanuel Ministries International (EMI) founder MA Thomas was granted anticipatory bail on April 21, but remains in hiding, All India Christian Council President John Dayal twld us on April 27. Dayal also reported that EMI President Samuel Thomas (son of MA Thomas) remains in judicial custody, with his next bail hearing scheduled for May 1. Rajasthan interlocutors predicted to us on April 27 that the Rajasthan government will make no arrests under the anti-conversion law and that Congress will oust the BJP from power in elections scheduled for November 2008 and revoke the law. The state governor has yet to approve the bill or send it forward to the state cabinet. The Rajasthan Government banned a second book that disparages Hinduism on April 27. BJP President Rajnath Singh called for each state under his party's rule to pass anti-conversion laws in order to "protect the demographic balance of the country." Our interlocutors suggested Singh's demand for these laws will not resonate well with the majority of BJP supporters, and will hasten the BJP's slide towards electoral troubles. End Summary.

EMI Founder Gets Bail, President Remains in Custody

[1](#)2. (U) The Supreme Court granted anticipatory bail to Emmanuel Ministries International (EMI) founder MA Thomas on April 21, but he remains in hiding, All India Christian Council President John Dayal told us on April 27. Dayal also reported that EMI President Samuel Thomas (son of MA Thomas) remains in judicial custody, with his next bail hearing scheduled for May 1. Dayal stated that all other EMI personnel have been released from custody and food is being

delivered to EMI orphanages and schools on credit.

EMI Property Dispute Continues

13. (U) Dayal indicated the property dispute between EMI and the Rajasthan Government has not been resolved. The state government maintains control over EMI property, Dayal stated, but its final ownership status remains in limbo, as powerful forces continue to press the state government to permanently close EMI.

Anti-Conversion Bill Will Be Short-Lived

14. (U) Rajasthan interlocutors asserted to us on April 27 that "no one will ever be arrested under the anti-conversion law." Most journalists and political pundits in the state agree that should the BJP lose the next election (as most now predict), the victorious Congress will swiftly revoke the law. The passage of the anti-conversion law was a political gimmick designed to appease a small segment of the Hindu population and does not have wide support in Rajasthan, our interlocutors told us. The state governor has yet to approve the bill or send it forward to the state cabinet.

Second "Offensive" Book Banned in Rajasthan

15. (U) On the heels of the banning of the book "Haqueeqat" (Ref A), the Rajasthan Government on April 27 banned the book

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"Ve Sharm Se Hindu Kahate Hain Kyon?" (Why Do They Say With Shame They Are Hindus?), claiming it "insulted the religious sentiments of a particular community." Written by a Hindu dalit, the book highlights dalit anger and divisions in the Hindu community. After the banning of "Haqueeqat," civil and human rights groups accused the BJP-led state government of using the book issue as a pretext for targeting Christians and pointed out that no action had been taken against Hindu authors of books that disparaged Hinduism. Our interlocutors told us that the BJP banned the second book, in part, to quell this complaint. Rajasthan political pundits also indicated that the BJP-led government banned the text to appease hard-line RSS elements of the party.

BJP President Calls for More Anti-Conversion Laws

16. (U) On April 11, BJP President Rajnath Singh called for each state under his party's rule to pass anti-conversion laws in order to "protect the demographic balance of the country." While congratulating the Rajasthan Government for passing the anti-conversion bill, he argued that the BJP did not "object to missionaries serving the poor." However, Singh then asserted that BJP governments should adopt laws "outlining stringent punishment in the event of a forced conversion." Our interlocutors predicted Singh's demand for these laws will not resonate well with the majority of BJP supporters, and hasten the BJP's slide towards electoral troubles.

17. (U) Visit New Delhi's Classified Website:
(<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/sa/newdelhi/>)
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